



Reference: 24-OIAD-004

9(2)(a)

13 March 2024

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a),

Response to your Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 05 March 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I'm getting in touch under the Official Information Act to please request information on proposed cost-cuts and cost-savings, flagged by the new Public Service Minister and government. Under the OIA can I please request the following:

- All communication with team leaders (eg managers) regarding said topic, and all official briefing documents on the matter?*
- In addition, Please also provide the amount of FTEs and the proposed ideal amount of FTEs under the new Government's cost saving model in the public service. (eg. How many FTEs are in each role?)*
- In addition, am I please able to get a copy of communication between the Ministry and the Minister, on the topic of cost savings, job cuts, and potential restructuring?*

I have interpreted the scope of your request to be for information on proposed cost-cuts and cost-savings, flagged by the new Public Service Minister and government in the form of communication with team leaders or managers, and official briefing documents. Additionally, I have interpreted the second part of your request to be for the number of FTEs in our organisation and the change to FTE after the introduction of the new government's cost-saving model, and for the third part of your request to be for

communication between Aroturuki Tamariki and the Minister, on the topic of cost savings, job cuts or potential restructuring.

I have identified six documents in scope of your request. You can find information regarding these in the attached document schedule.

One document, from Te Kawa Mataaho the Public Service Commission, is released to you in full. Two documents are released in part and three documents have been withheld in full under the following sections of the Act:

section 9(2)(f) withholding of the information is necessary to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect—

- (iv) the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

section 9(2)(g) withholding of the information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through—

- (i) free and frank discussion of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty

section 9(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons

Internal communications with team leaders or managers regarding proposed cost-cuts and cost-savings have been mainly verbal in nature. One update was noted in leadership team meeting minutes; content relating to Budget material that is currently under consideration by Ministers has been withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act. Another update was given at a meeting in December 2023 and covered the information contained in the documents captured in this request at a high level; this was noted in the meeting minutes as "*New government priorities discussed*". One email discussing our approach to responding to another OIA request on cost saving measures, redundancies and restructures is released in part, with out-of-scope information and personal identifying details of individuals withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect those individuals' identities.

Information related to savings is still actively being considered by Ministers and will be throughout the Budget process. The release of this material at this time could prejudice Budget decisions that are yet to be made. Consistent with past practice and recognising the strong public interest in Budget decisions, the Treasury will be undertaking a Budget proactive release, which is scheduled to be released in the weeks following Budget Day on their website here <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/budgets>.

In relation to the second part of your request which asks for the number of FTEs in our organisation, and the number this would change to after the introduction of the new government's cost-saving model, Aroturuki Tamariki currently employs 57.60 FTE, and is holding two vacancies. Because any changes in FTE that may occur as a result of cost savings is still being actively being considered by Ministers, this information is also withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note that due to the public interest in our work, Aroturuki Tamariki publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#). If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact us on info@aroturuki.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi nui



Arran Jones
Chief Executive

Document schedule

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	21 Dec 2023	2023 12 21 Letter to Arran Jones	Release in full	n/a
2	24 Jan 2024	Draft GWPS Consultation Jan 24	Withhold in full	S9(2)(f)(iv)
3	21 Dec 2023	B24 invitation letter	Withhold in full	S9(2)(f)(iv)
4	26 Jan 2024	Email FW: Baseline savings reductions – media response	Withhold in full	S9(2)(f)(iv) and S9(2)(g)(i)
5	14 February 2024	01. Minutes from Previous Meeting 14 Feb	Release in part	S9(2)(f)(iv)
6	26 Jan 2024	RE_Media request	Release in part	S9(2)(a)

Released under the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982



Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

21 December 2023

Mr Arran Jones
Chief Executive
Independent Children's Monitor
By email: arran.jones@aroturuki.govt.nz

Dear Arran

This letter sets out your interim performance expectations for the first 100 days of the Government's term. This letter updates, and replaces as appropriate, the *Results and services to deliver Government priorities* section of your previous performance expectations agreed in early 2023.

As you are aware, the Government's priorities for its first 100 calendar days in office are to:

- rebuild the economy and ease the cost of living
- restore law and order, and
- deliver better public services.

As much as possible, the initial policy agenda will focus on just the items in the 100-Day Plan to 8 March 2024, along with the Government's fiscal approach and the development of targets. While you are not a lead agency for actions under the 100-Day Plan, where you play a key support or enabling role for other agencies that are leading on actions, I expect you to prioritise support for them to achieve their actions.

Ministers may also wish to progress groundwork required to deliver on the coalition agreement commitments that are outside of the 100-Day Plan. I expect you are already discussing immediate priorities for your agency with your Minister, and that these discussions will continue into the new year.

The Government intends to develop targets for public services to help maintain momentum at the end of the 100-day period. You may also be asked to contribute to this work.

Reducing public sector expenditure

The Government expects agencies to start reducing public sector expenditure, including consultant and contractor expenditure, with a focus on value for money and aligning expenditure with the Government's priorities. Further guidance will be provided through Ministerial offices and direct communication from the Treasury.

I reiterate my expectation that you will have stood up a structured programme of work and ensure that this links in with the Government's policy tracking and savings assurance processes that are currently being finalised. I also reiterate my expectation that you engage with employees and unions

during this process as the people doing the work are well placed to identify improvements or efficiencies that may enable the achievement of expected cost reductions.

2024 expectations

Following the end of the 100-day period, you will receive updated performance expectations that reflect any additional results, targets or portfolio priorities set by Ministers. The Commission will also agree with you your development plan for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gaye Searancke', with some additional scribbles to the right.

Gaye Searancke
Te Pou Turuki mō Te Kawa Mataaho
Deputy Public Service Commissioner

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Out of scope

1. Finance Update (Arran)

We are currently working out what 6.5% savings looks like for the monitor. We are working through the budget process and the dollar value is not yet known. There will be challenges to save, as we don't have big programs or initiatives – we have built ourselves lean. What we have developed is already cost-effective. (b)(2)(f)(w)

[Redacted]

It's important we book travel well in advance when we can and look for the cheapest travel deals. We need to keep a careful eye on budget month to month.

Out of scope

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From: [Rachel Dahlberg](#)
To: [Arran Jones](#); [Nova Banaghan](#); [Shelley Tyson](#)
Cc: [Alison Hill](#); [Jenna Pollard](#)
Subject: RE: Media request
Date: Friday, 26 January 2024 11:15:00 am

Treasury has replied saying that all media queries re cost savings can be referred to them. I've also updated the holding vacancies number to 2 reflecting Nova's comment re one staff member on long-term unpaid leave.

Updated response to **9(2)(a)**:

There has been no communication with staff on potential redundancies or restructures and there have been no job cuts. We are however holding two vacancies.

Any queries regarding cost saving expectations should be referred to Treasury.

Let me know if you have any concerns, otherwise I'll send it off.

Rachel

Rachel Dahlberg
Kaiwhakahaere Tūhono | Manager Communications
Aroturuki Tamariki | Independent Children's Monitor
Phone: **9(2)(a)**

From: Arran Jones <Arran.Jones@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 4:19 PM
To: Rachel Dahlberg <Rachel.Dahlberg@aroturuki.govt.nz>; Nova Banaghan <Nova.Banaghan@aroturuki.govt.nz>; Shelley Tyson <Shelley.Tyson@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Cc: Alison Hill <Alison.Hill@aroturuki.govt.nz>; Jenna Pollard <Jenna.Pollard@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Media request

Thanks Rachel.

Jenna, can you please check in with the MO. This is all subject to budget/government decision making so we need to think this through carefully, and handle as an OIA.

My initial thoughts on a response are:

There has been no communication with staff on potential redundancies or Restructures and there have been no job cuts. We are however, holding three vacancies.

Decisions around the government's savings expectations are in train, and therefore withheld under sections 9(2)(f) and 9(2)(g).

Arran Jones
Chief Executive
Aroturuki Tamariki | Independent Children's Monitor

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Aroturuki Tamariki | Independent Children's Monitor

From: Communications <Communications@Aroturuki.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 3:52 PM
To: Arran Jones <Arran.Jones@aroturuki.govt.nz>; Nova Banaghan <Nova.Banaghan@aroturuki.govt.nz>; Shelley Tyson <Shelley.Tyson@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Cc: Alison Hill <Alison.Hill@Aroturuki.govt.nz>; Jenna Pollard <Jenna.Pollard@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Media request

Kia ora

See the below from 9(2)(a) – is there any guidance from PSC on the request re savings?

Out of scope



Rachel Dahlberg
Kaiwhakahaere Tūhono | Manager Communications
Aroturuki Tamariki | Independent Children's Monitor
Phone: 9(2)(a)

From: 9(2)(a)
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 3:20 PM
To: Communications <Communications@aroturuki.govt.nz>
Subject: Media request

[External email]: Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. Contact the Helpdesk if in doubt.

Kia ora,

Just a request around the cost saving measures and also staff redundancies:

On redundancies:

Are we able to please be sent any communication sent to staff as a whole regarding potential redundancies or organisational restructures? How many job cuts has there been already? How many roles are proposed/finalised to go? And have voluntary redundancies been offered to staff?

Regarding the request by the Minister for cost savings:

Is the percentage that has been requested to cut 6.5% or more?

If you could please get back to me by 11am tomorrow (Friday), it would be much appreciated.

Kind regards

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9(2)(a)

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